

Internet "wiretapping" will be prone to massive abuse. Rather than targeting individuals after obtaining a lawful warrant, it is more likely that Internet traffic will be monitored using software to "sniff" for key phrases ("bomb," "porn," "Osama," "human rights," "guns," "I wish [the President] were dead," and so forth). All of this traffic will then be aggregated into a database, with certain messages flagged for further "analysis."

None of this information will ever disappear. What happens when someone later runs for political office, and some wacky e-mail they wrote in 2004 is "leaked." History already has examples of this kind of abuse: witness Martin Luther King Jr. having a package delivered to his house by Hoover's FBI to harrass him by letting his wife know he was having an affair.

There can never be enough safeguards to keep government from abusing its power. Such powers as monitoring Internet traffic at will is something the government should never have in the first place.